

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TUNIS 01498 050809Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 MCT-01 SSM-03 DHA-02 OMB-01
TRSE-00 AF-08 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ORM-02
AID-05 /103 W
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R 050638Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5960
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, TS, XF, PLO
SUBJECT: REPORT THAT PALESTINIAN LEADERS ARE TO HOLD "PRE-COUNCIL" MEETING IN TUNIS

REF: TUNIS 1295

1. ON MARCH 4 TWO TUNIS DAILIES (SEMI-INDEPENDENT "LE TEMPS" AND GOVERNMENT ORGAN "LA PRESSE") CARRIED IDENTICAL ARTICLE DATE-LINED "NICOSIA" ANNOUNCING THAT PRINCIPAL LEADERS ("LES PRINCIPAUX VESPONSAKES HISTORIQUES") OF PLO WILL MEET IN TUNIS IN NEXT FEW DAYS, IN PREPARATION FOR PLO NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD IN CAIRO BEGINNING MARCH 12.
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PAGE 02 TUNIS 01498 050809Z

2. GOT HAD ANNOUNCED MARCH 3 THAT PLO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE PRESIDENT YASSER ARAFAT WOULD OPEN THE SECOND CONGRESS OF UNION OF PALESTINIAN WRITERS AND JOURNALISTS IN TUNIS ON MARCH 4. ALTHOUGH THIS MEETING HAD BEEN ANNOUNCED SEVERAL WEEKS EARLIER, RUMORS THAT ARAFAT WOULD GIVE OPENING ADDRESS WERE ONLY CONFIRMED AT EVE OF THIS MEETING, WHICH

WILL CONTINUE THROUGH MARCH 9.

3. THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL GOT OR PLO ANNOUNCEMENT AS TO HOW LONG ARAFAT WILL REMAIN IN TUNIS NOR WHEN AND IF PREPARATORY PLO LEADERSHIP MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE. (ABDEL ABOU MAYZAR, MEMBER PLO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, HAD SAID IN TUNIS ON FEBRUARY 22 THAT RUMORS OF SUCH A MEETING WERE WITHOUT FOUNDATION.) ACCORDING TO MARCH 4 NEWSPAPER STORY, WHICH IS NOT ATTRIBUTED AS TO SOURCE, MEETING WITH TAKE PLACE AND WILL INVOLVE ARAFAT AND MEMBERS OF REJECTION FRONT, OBJECTIVE BEING TO REVIEW QUESTIONS WHICH WILL BE DISCUSSED IN SUBSEQUENT PALESTINIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING IN CAIRO. IMPLICATION IS THAT PURPOSE OF UNIS MEETING IS TO FIND COMMON GROUND ON WHICH ALL ELEMENTS OF PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT CAN AGREE IN CAIRO.

4. ARTICLE CONTINUES THAT "CONSIDERABLE PRESSURES, NOTABLY MILITARY, DESIGNED TO OVERCOME PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT'S HISTORIC REFUSAL TO RECOGNIZE EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL HAVE AND ARE BEING TAKEN BY ARAB STATES NOW WANTING TO END CONFLICT WHICH IMPEDES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TO WHICH THEIR COUNTRIES ASPIRE." THE RESULT OF THIS PRESSURE REPORTEDLY IS AN EVIDENT MODERATION IN THE TONE OF PLO LEADERS. ARTICLE EXPRESSES HOPE THAT PALESTINIANS WILL TRANSLATE THIS MODERATION INTO FACT BY TAKING PUBLIC POSITIONS WHICH WILL ALLOW FOR OPENING THE ROAD TO GENEVA. ARTICLE NOTES THAT "FACILITATING THIS EVOLUTION, FIRST SIGNIFICANT MEASURE HAS BEEN TAKEN: FOR FIRST TIME SINCE FEBRUARY 1969, THE GUERRILLA MOVEMENTS WILL BE IN MINORITY IN NEW PALESTINIAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 TUNIS 01498 050809Z

ASSEMBLY." IF THIS GROUP ADOPTS CONCEPT OF A PALESTINIAN STATE COMPRISING ONLY GAZA AND WEST BANK, "THE STORM WILL HAVE BEEN WEATHERED." FAROUK KADDOUMI IS QUOTED AS HAVING SAID PALESTINIANS MIGHT BE CONTENT WITH A MINI-STATE ENCOMPASSING GAZA AND WEST BANK IF IT HAS GUARANTEE FROM GREAT POWERS AND IS INDEPENDENT.

5. ARTICCLE CLOSES BY SAYING IT IS NOT CERTAIN PALESTINIANS ARE READY TO RENOUNCE IMMEDIATELY THEIR HISTORIC POSITION, UNTIL THEY ARE CERTAIN OF BEING ACCEPTED AT NEGOTIATING TABLE AND UNTIL THE "NATIONAL RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE" ARE ACCEPTED IN GENEVA CONTEXT. ARTICLE NOTES THAT PALESTINIANS' USUAL POLICY IS NOT TO REDUCE THEIR LATITUDE OF NEGOTIATION WITHOUT GETTING SOMETHING IN RETURN.
MULCAHY

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Sent Date: 05-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
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